

well while another is under recognition.

POSTER BABY FOR HEALTH CARE REFORM

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, might I introduce to you the poster baby for health care reform.

In Denver, a wonderful bouncing baby was denied health insurance because the baby weighed about 17 pounds and was 4 months old, and it was determined that he had a pre-existing disease of obesity.

Now, all of us know how wonderful it is to have a healthy baby who has a full and wonderful round look. We also know about something called baby fat, and for us mothers we know how a bouncing, bountiful baby can turn into that lean marathon runner. That's just the way it is.

So for all of the reports that our insurance companies are attempting to undermine the effort of ensuring that every American has access to health care and that we rid ourselves of this whole condition of preexisting disease, here's your example.

What an outrage.

IN HONOR OF THE 56TH STRYKER BRIGADE COMBAT TEAM

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 754. It was an emotional time in Pennsylvania as members of the 56th Stryker Brigade Combat Team came home from Iraq to a tribute of yellow ribbons and flying flags. The homecoming elation belies the fear that always accompanies soldiers at war.

NBC correspondent Richard Engel described one of the uses of a Stryker vehicle now in Afghanistan: "We're warned about IEDs, improvised explosive devices, a somewhat desensitized way of saying bombs that can blow you to pieces and throw your body 75 feet in the air."

"Some of the Strykers, the soldier's armored vehicles, are fitted with giant rollers. They stick out in front of the big armored trucks, making the Strykers look like the machines that pick up golf balls at a driving range. The Strykers push the heavy wheels of the rollers over the sand. If the wheels hit an IED, the device will blow up; if not, the ground is safe."

"We walk in a double-file line in the tracks left by the rollers. I try to walk in the footsteps of the soldier in front of me."

This is a stark reality of the job the Stryker Brigade performs in both Iraq and Afghanistan. It is just one of the reasons we honor their service today.

HEALTH CARE BILLS ARE FRIGHTENING

(Mr. GINGREY of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. Madam Speaker, we currently have Democratic health care reform bills under consideration. Surveyed together, our options are frightening. H.R. 3200 adds \$239 billion to the deficit, it opens the door for illegal aliens to get benefits, and it could move up to a hundred million Americans off of their current health care plan and onto the government-run option.

The Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee bill forces a government takeover of our Nation's health care system and allows the government to sell products that all Americans must buy. The Senate Finance Committee bill cuts over \$400 billion from the health benefits of our seniors. It increases the average insurance premium for American families by \$4,000, and it still leaves 2.5 million Americans uninsured even with its \$1.8 trillion expenditure.

As bad as these bills are, what they will become once HARRY REID, NANCY PELOSI and their liberal allies in the Senate take them behind closed doors to craft a final product will be much, much worse. Personally, the last people I want deciding my family's health care are Speaker PELOSI and Leader REID.

TRIBUTE TO CHRISTOPHER FRENZE OF THE JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE

(Mr. BRADY of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today in tribute to Mr. Christopher Frenze, Republican House staff director for the Joint Economic Committee, who's retiring this week from a distinguished career in government service.

Chris joined the Joint Economic Committee in 1981. His career has been distinguished by his relentless effort to promote the public interest, encourage economic growth, reduce the burden of government, and respect the Constitution. His knowledge of economic policy is only one of his many talents.

He's an effective, successful manager who recruited top economists to serve the committee for many years. His work has served both Senate and House Republican Members in the majority and in the minority. He represents the very best in public service.

I know I speak for all of my colleagues in the Joint Economic Committee in congratulating Chris upon his retirement and thanking him in his dedicated and tireless service to the United States Congress.

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SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

AFGHANISTAN IS NOT A WAR OF NECESSITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Madam Speaker, the White House is figuring how they should treat Afghanistan, what to do about Afghanistan. As they review the situation, they must be asking themselves a lot of questions: Should our strategy be counterinsurgency or counterterrorism? Should we send in 40,000 more troops, or 20,000 more troops, or should we send in any more at all? And is the Taliban really a threat to our national security?

Meanwhile, the American people are asking the most important question of all: Is the war a war of necessity? And most Americans are coming to the conclusion that it is not. And I agree with them.

Our military presence in Afghanistan is not necessary because al Qaeda, which attacked us on 9/11, simply isn't in Afghanistan anymore. In fact, it's estimated that only about 100 al Qaeda fighters remain in the country. Our military presence isn't necessary because it will lead us into another foreign quagmire. Escalating the war will require massive numbers of troops. They will be fighting an endless war with many casualties, no exit strategy at this point, and the American people will not put up with that.

This war is not necessary because it will cost hundreds of billions of dollars. That's the money we need to put the American people back to work, Madam Speaker, and to get our economy back on track. And finally, this war is not necessary because we have better alternatives.

First and foremost, these alternatives include smart security. Smoking out and stopping the violent extremists in Afghanistan requires the effective surgical tool of smart security, not the blunt instrument of massive military occupancy. Smart security calls for strengthening our intelligence and surveillance capabilities. That's absolutely essential because the best way to stop the extremists in Afghanistan is to penetrate and disrupt their networks.

Smart security calls for improvements in civilian policing. A well-trained police force is a highly effective counterinsurgency tool because it's right there in the communities where the extremists are. Smart security calls for a regional diplomatic surge. Afghanistan's neighbors have an interest in stabilizing the country just

as we do. Those nations include Russia, China and Iran. They need to be engaged.

Smart security also recognizes that al Qaeda and other extremist groups have the ability to shift gears and set up shop in other places around the world, probably in the poorest places they can find.

That's why smart security supports investments in the development of impoverished nations, to give people the hope and the opportunity they need to reject violence and hatred in the first place. And because we need to keep the extremists away from weapons of mass destruction, smart security calls for vigorous inspection regimes and a renewed commitment to nuclear non-proliferation.

In this session of Congress, Madam Speaker, I have introduced House Resolution 363, the "Smart Security Platform for the 21st Century." It is the blueprint we need to defeat extremism in Afghanistan and elsewhere in the world. Madam Speaker, the strategy I have described is tough. It is pragmatic. It will protect the lives of our brave troops, and it will keep our Nation safe.

As the administration conducts its review of the situation in Afghanistan, I urge them to choose this strategy because it is the winning strategy.

HALLOWEEN HEALTH CARE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. POE of Texas. Madam Speaker, somewhere in the deep, dark, moldy caverns of this Capitol building, known only to the very few, the taxacrats are very busy writing their Halloween health care bill. They want to shove it through Congress before Halloween. How appropriate a date for that nightmare.

The Senate took another step today toward Halloween health care. The Senate Finance Committee passed something they called a "concept" bill. It's not really a bill, it's just a concept, an idea. That means the bill is not really actually written. But they passed it out of the Senate Finance Committee anyway.

Now, they're supposed to merge it together with the trillion dollar Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee health care bill. That's the HELP bill. The Senate passed that earlier this year. So in the secret caverns of the Capitol, the health-care-crats are going to merge the two Senate bills to come up with the final Halloween health care bill.

Here is the problem with all the bills so far: The government decides our health care. All the power and all the control goes to the Federal Government. It lets the government decide what procedures doctors may perform on their patients. If some new medicine comes along, it won't be covered. You

have to go into the government-run plan to get new medicines. And you have to pay a big fine if you don't buy insurance when you're young and healthy. I'm sure the youth of America will like that new change in health care. Plus, businesses that cannot afford to have health care for their employees will also get stuck with an 8.5 percent tax. Of course, that will put some businesses out of business. In other words, tax them out of business.

The bills are so vague that illegals probably are covered in all of the bills as well. Also these bills tax good insurance plans like the ones that many union members have. If someone pays more to get better insurance, the government is going to make them pay for having that better insurance with higher taxes. And millions of people are still not covered in the bills. Now wasn't that supposed to be the reason for all of this reform? We are turning the health of America over to the government, and these bills still won't cover everyone.

And even when they still don't cover millions of people, government health care is just too expensive. America cannot afford it. Government-run health care is going to cost the taxpayers at least another trillion dollars at the very least. And where are we going to get the money? We don't have the money.

Now the taxacrats are trying to tell us that putting everyone in a new government-run health care system won't cost the taxpayers any money. Well, they are wrong. That would be the first time in history a government-run program like this health care bill costs less than it was supposed to be.

If you liked your health care when you had to pay for it, Madam Speaker, you will really like it when it's free.

There's more. Government health care is going to cut half a billion dollars out of Medicare to help pay for this Halloween health care bill. Of course, that scares our seniors. And another thing that's odd: Every single one of these bills don't go into effect until the year 2013. Now why is that? But the new taxes take effect in 2010. That's right. American taxpayers pay 3 years of new taxes on plans that don't take effect for 3 more years. Now isn't that lovely.

So what's the big rush to pass all this? You'd think they're trying to hide something. And I wonder what that could be? If this is such a great deal, why is there deception surrounding this health care bill? Why not have openness before we vote on it? Let's have floor amendments. Let's have lively floor debate on it. Let's take our time. After all, the bills don't take effect for 3 more years. And maybe we'll have time for everyone in the House and the Senate to read these bills. Now there's a thought.

Halloween health care is just a nightmare. And the people I represent in southeast Texas don't want the government controlling their health care. But

Halloween health care looms in the dark shadows of these hallowed halls. Where the trolls roam at night, the bureaucrats write their health care bill, while the taxpayers continue to ask, "trick or treat?" And that's just the way it is.

THREAT OF TERRORISM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. QUIGLEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. QUIGLEY. Eight years ago, the U.S. entered Afghanistan. Now 8 years later, 791 American deaths and billions of dollars later, we must ask, what have we gained? Has our 8 years in Afghanistan made us safer? And will 8 more years make us safer still?

As we speak, the administration is reviewing the best strategy to achieve one primary objective: To protect Americans from another terrorist attack. We agree on the objective. We differ on the strategy.

As we move to define our strategy, the question we must continue to ask ourselves is: how do we keep Americans safe from a terrorist attack? Recent events suggest that we need to broaden our focus and think bigger than Afghanistan. After all, we are battling not simply against terrorists in Afghanistan but against terrorism, which we are learning has many fronts, extending from Afghanistan to Pakistan to Somalia, Yemen, Uzbekistan and even our own backyard.

Over the past 2 weeks, five men have been arrested for plotting terror attacks in our country. One man lived in New York for more than a decade and was planning to detonate a bomb there on the anniversary of September 11.

Thomas Friedman argued in his recent New York Times column that the most active front in this war against terrorism is "not Afghanistan, but the 'virtual Afghanistan,' the loose network of thousands of jihadist Web sites, mosques and prayer groups that recruit, inspire and train young Muslims to kill."

The young Jordanian who was recently arrested for attempting to blow up a building in Dallas was caught after declaring war on the U.S. on jihadist Web sites.

We must broaden our focus. Jihadist networks are also gaining ground in unstable states such as Somalia and Yemen. Recently, a source at a U.S. defense agency stated, We know that south Asia is no longer al Qaeda's primary base. They are looking for a hideout in other parts of the world and continue to expand their organization.

We must broaden our focus. Two weeks ago, a major Uzbek terrorist with links to the Taliban and al Qaeda was killed in south Pakistan. The man killed was the leader of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, a group whose goal was to set up an Islamist state there and ultimately throughout central Asia.